£1.20

FARTHING WOOD FRIENDS

53

Based on the series shown on BBC TV.

FREE Alphabet stamps

NATURE FUN AND LEARN SERIES

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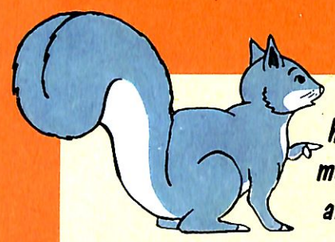

Squirrel says,

Hello Friends, here's a quick note from me about how to use your alphabet stickers!

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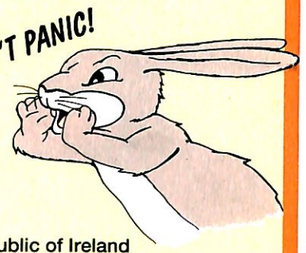
By issue 58 you will have received two complete sets of alphabet stickers, plus an extra A, E, P and S. Use these stickers to spell out your name, or that of a friend, on the front of a notebook, lunchbox or bedroom door.

If you haven't got all your copies of Farthing Wood Friends



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CREDITS
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Key: AA = All About ...; CII = Colour it in; DN = Discovering Nature; FF = Fascinating Facts; HTD = How to Draw; PIO = Puzzle it out; SW = Secret World.

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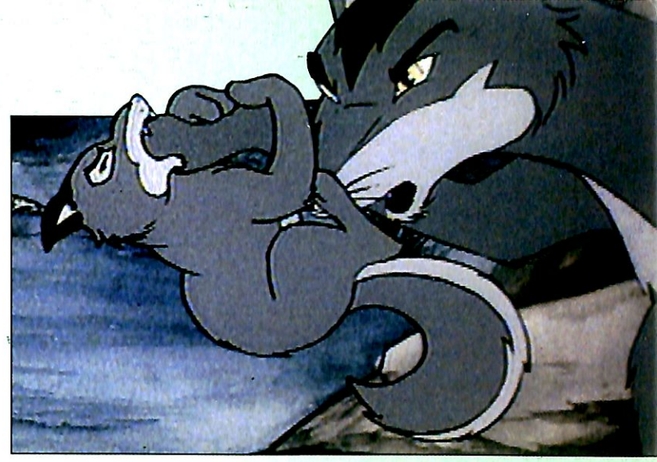
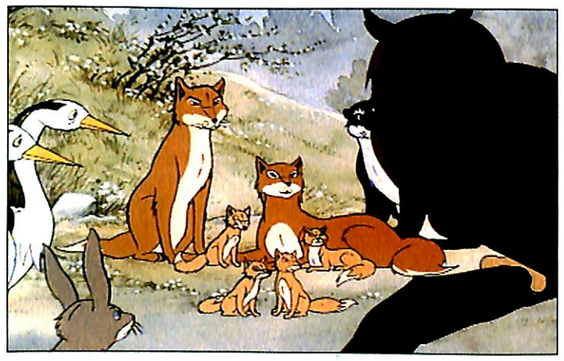
41: New arrivals

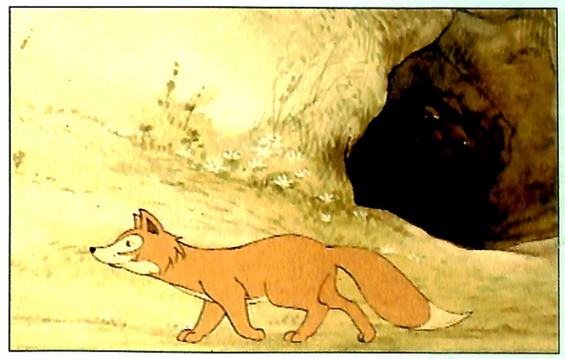


Inside Scarface's den, Lady Blue was sitting with her cubs. "Aren't they beautiful?" she said. One of the cubs grabbed Scarface's nose. "He's a great ranger, that one," said Lady Blue.

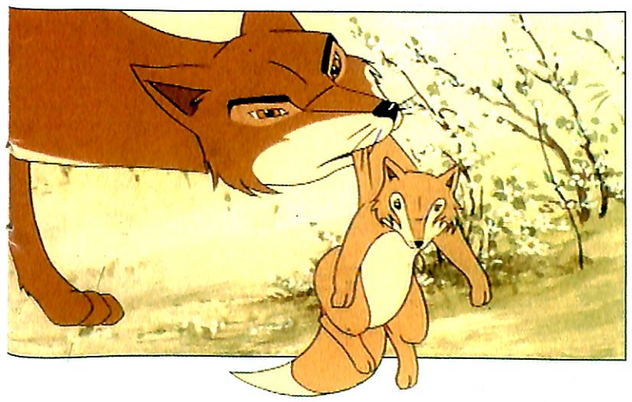
"We'll call him Ranger – he'll be a real help to his Dad against those red foxes," Scarface told her.



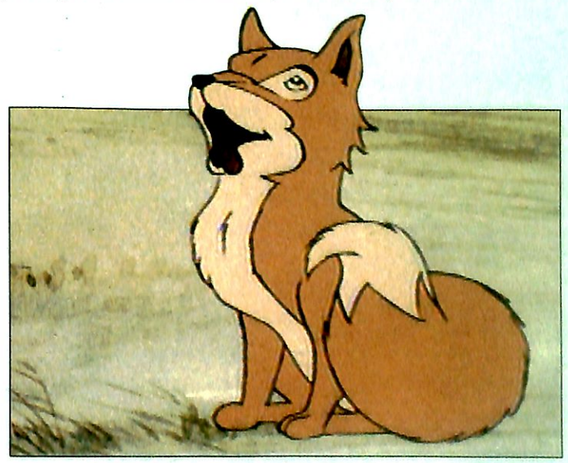
Fox and Vixen had also had cubs. All the animals gathered to celebrate the occasion. Owl began, "Fox and Vixen are dear to all our hearts ..." "Hear, hear," cried the other animals, interrupting her speech.



One of the cubs wandered off, head in the air. "Proper little dreamer, that one," said Vixen.

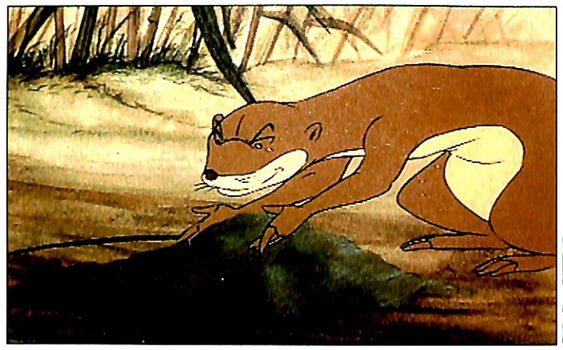


"Come here!" she called, but the cub took no notice. Fox reached out and grabbed Dreamer by the scruff of her neck. "You stay with your mother," he said.

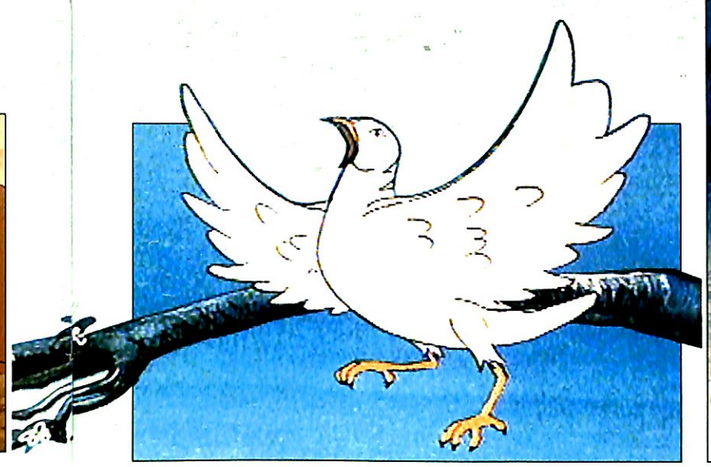


But the little cub was soon off again and this time it was her brother who brought her back. "He's a bold little chap, isn't he?" said Badger. "Which reminds me, has anyone seen Mole?"

No-one had, so Badger decided to go and look for him. He wandered past some reeds where Weasel was hiding. She decided to play a trick on him.



She piled up some earth to look like a molehill and stuck a long twig into it. When Badger came by, he stopped. The earth moved slightly.



A shot was heard from the edge of the Park. The poachers had taken a shot at a pigeon. Owl reported the men's position to Fox and the White Stag.

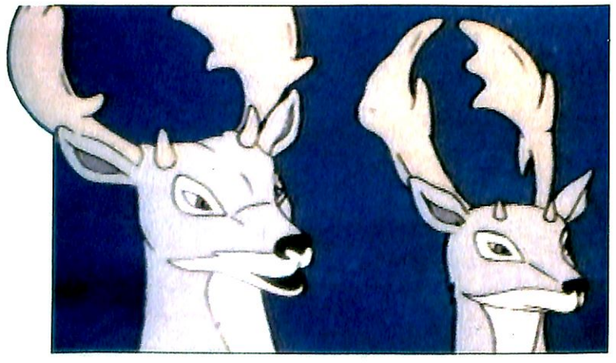
As the men walked towards the trees, they did not see the herd of deer hidden in the dappled light.

"Is that you, Moley?" he called. There was no answer, so Badger looked closer ... and then Weasel flicked the earth into his face.

"Bah you ... you ... Weasel!" said Badger crossly, as she ran past, laughing.

Then Stag gave the signal ...

... and the herd charged.

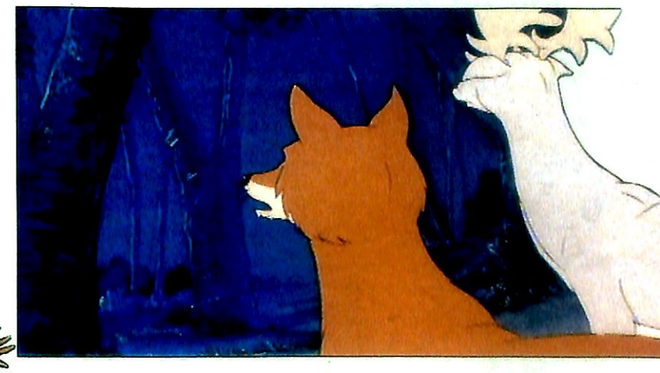


The White Stag had a new plan to beat the poachers. He decided to visit Fox. "You helped us, now we can help you," said the Stag. "Have you ever seen a herd of deer in full charge? It is a fearsome sight."

"The poachers would be terrified," said Badger. "If you can help by warning us, we will charge them next time they enter the Park," said Stag. That evening, as the sun set, the poachers were back.

The men turned and ran. As the deer caught up with them, they scrambled over the fence.

"They did it! They actually did it," cried Fox.



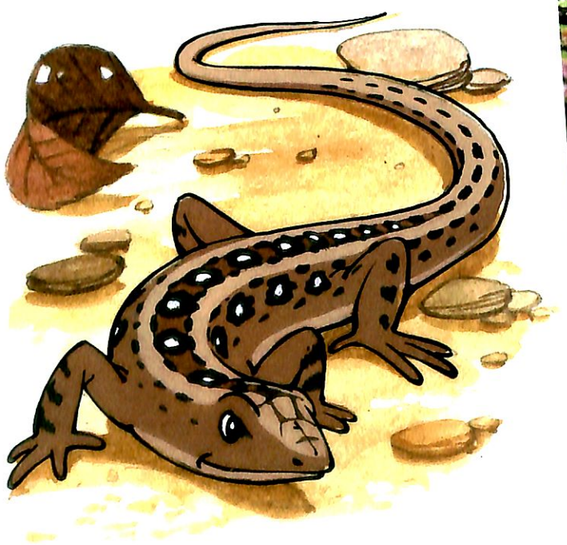
Next week: Will they return?

All About...

Sand lizards

"Hi there! Remember me? I'm Britain's rarest lizard. I look quite like Common lizard, though I'm a little bigger and usually more spotty. The only places you're likely to find me are on sandy heaths in Dorset, Hampshire and Surrey and along the Merseyside coast. We Sand lizards do not live in any part of Ireland.

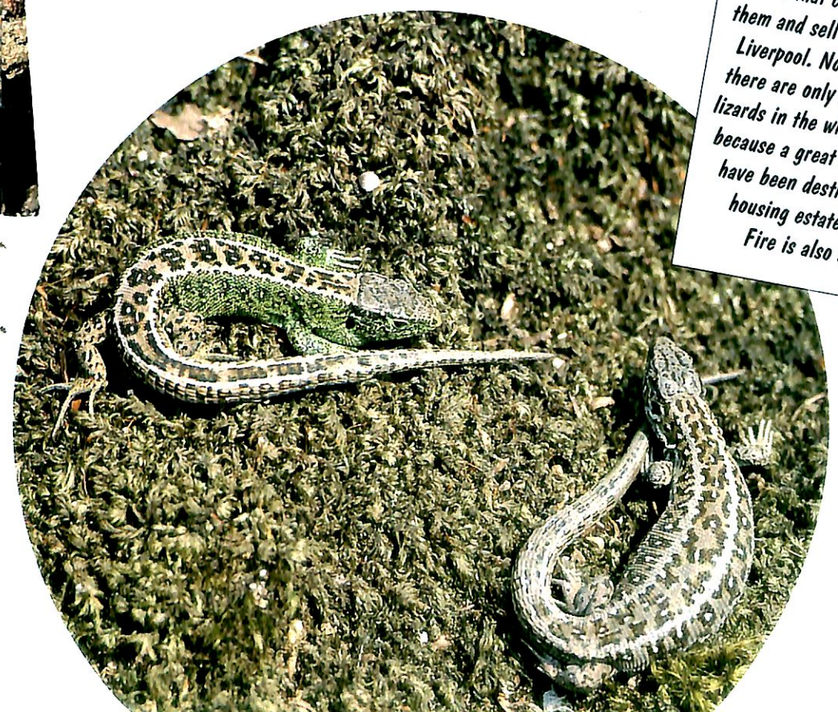
Like other reptiles, we have to warm up our bodies before we can start moving about. The winters in Britain are too cold and cloudy for us, so we hibernate in holes in the ground and don't emerge until the end of March or early April."



We Sand lizards vary in colour and markings. Usually we are greyish brown with rows of dark brown blotches, which sometimes have lighter dots in the centre. The males have greenish sides. We can grow to 20cm. Like Common lizards, we have sharp claws that help us to scramble up plants and banks in search of prey.

We have strong jaws and large stomachs, so when there is a good supply of food about, we tuck in. We snap up spiders, flies, grasshoppers, beetles, moths, damselflies, woodlice and slugs. We sometimes shake our prey to stun it before we swallow.

When we're ready to mate, we males grab hold of the female on her side and then move up towards her head. Mating can last for up to three hours.



Weasel's Easel

Between 1940 and 1960, Sand lizards were so common in the Lancashire sand dunes that children used to catch them and sell them to pet shops in Liverpool. Now, naturalists think there are only about 7500 adult Sand lizards in the whole of Britain. This is because a great number of their sites have been destroyed to make roads, housing estates and gravel pits. Fire is also a big problem.

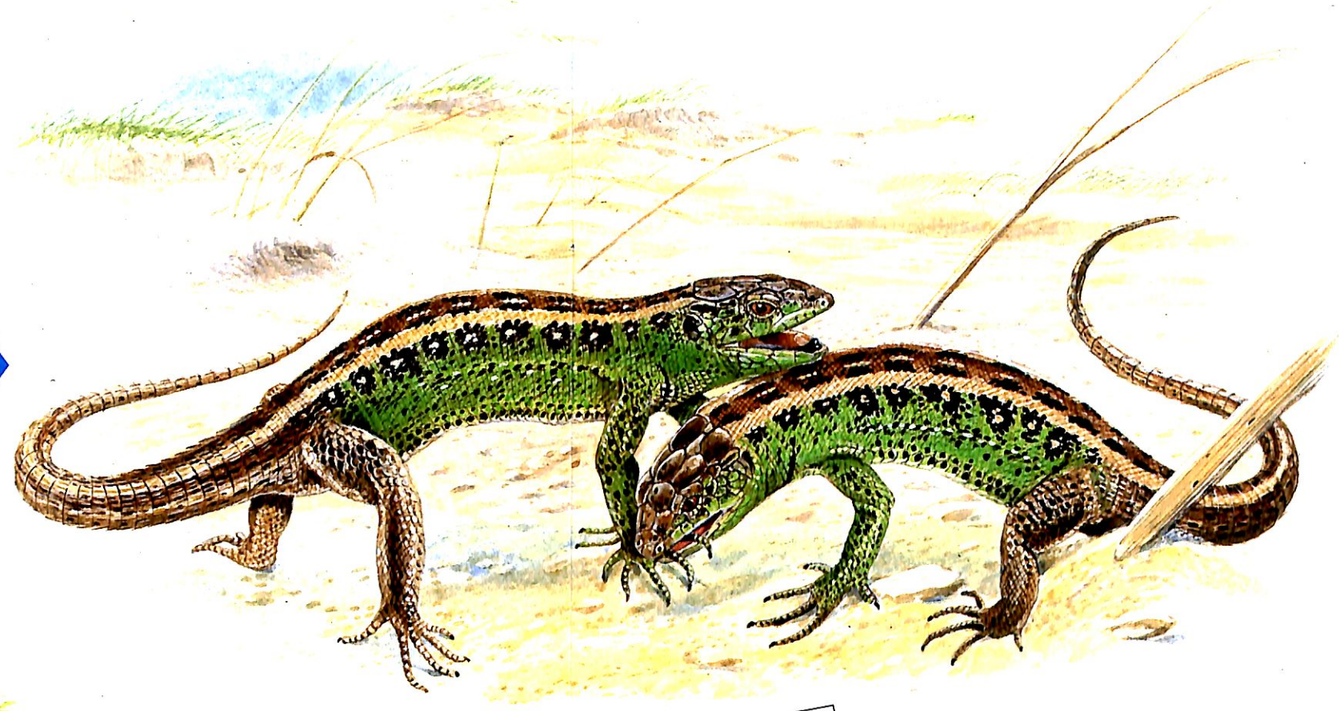
Although we males stake out territories for ourselves and often chase away intruders, when it is warm enough for basking, we will sometimes share a sunny bank with another lizard.

All About...

Spring and summer

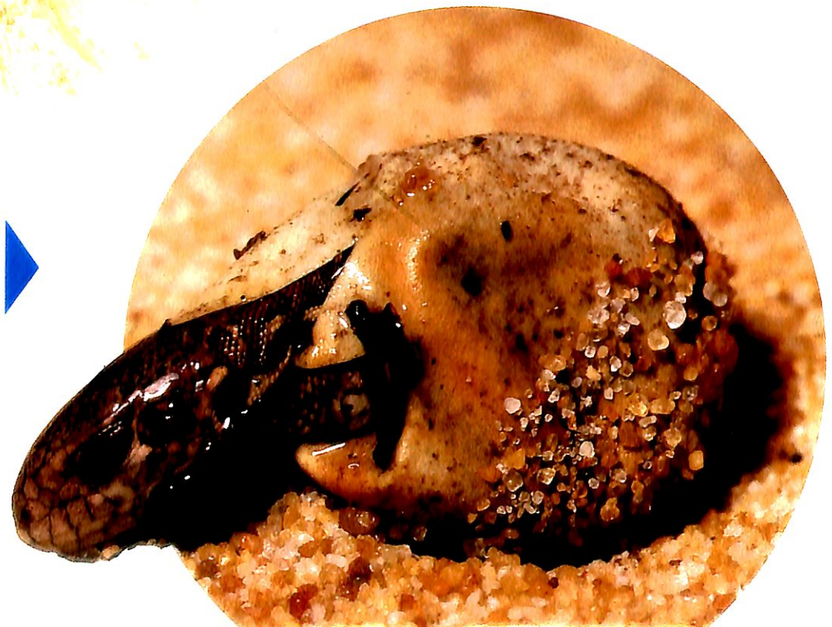
"When we emerge from hibernation, we spend many hours warming up. This is a good time to look for us. We males come out first and soon shed our winter skins. We're easier to spot because we develop bright green sides during the mating season. This helps us to attract females."

At this time of year, we males often fight one another. We puff out our necks and the top part of our bodies and twitch our tails backwards and forwards. Standing up as tall as we can, we open our mouths and hiss angrily, lunging at our rival's head or shoulders. We bite each other and roll on the ground. Sometimes we break, or even lose, a finger or toe in the fight. The battle continues until one of us admits defeat.



After mating, the female spends some time sunbathing. Then she starts to look for a spot to lay her eggs. This needs to be in a sandy place, which is easy to dig into. The site must also be warmed by the sun, otherwise the eggs will not hatch. Sometimes she tries out several different places before making her final choice.

She uses her head to dig into a sandy bank to a depth of about 7cm, flicking the sand back with her forearms. Then she lays a clutch of six or seven creamy white eggs and covers them with loose sand.



Our eggs are oval and have a soft shell that stretches as the developing young grow. It takes between six and twelve weeks for them to be ready to hatch. They use a special tooth to chip theirway out of the egg.

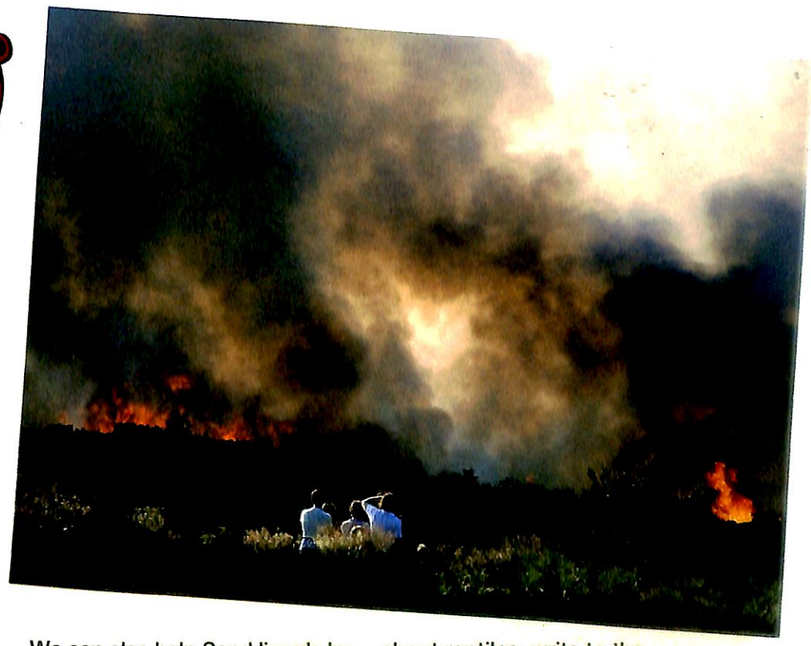
When the babies crawl out of their hole, usually in early September, they are only about 6cm long, with rows of light spots along their backs.

Weasel's Easel
A female may try digging up to eight different egg sites.

FIRE!

Do you remember the terrible fire that swept across the heath and nearly trapped the animals of Farthing Wood? Well, heathland fires are very bad news for Sand lizards. The flames can spread across a huge area, burning everything in sight. Even if the lizards manage to take shelter in a burrow, when they come out they are very noticeable against the blackened plant stems. Predators, like Crows and Kestrels, can easily spot and catch them.

We can all help by making sure that we do not light fires on or near any piece of heath – even the butt of a lighted cigarette is enough to start a huge fire.



We can also help Sand lizards by making sure that the heaths are kept clear of trees such as conifers and birches and that there are plenty of bare, sandy places where they can lay their eggs.

If you want to find out more about reptiles, write to the British Herpetological Society, c/o the Zoological Society, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY. You can also join their Young Herpetologists' club.

It's Amazing!

TAIL-PIECE

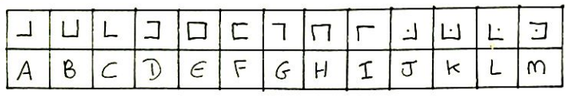
If a Sand lizard is caught by the tail, it can, like the Common lizard, snap it off and escape. This is because each of the main bones in its tail has a tiny crack in it.

Although this is a good way of escaping from a predator, it does mean that the lizard has to use up a lot of energy growing a new one.

Dear Friends!

You're all so good at my secret code now, that I've thought up a new one to baffle you. It's called the pig pen code. Can you work out which three characters' names are written below? (The answers are at the bottom of the page if you get stuck.)

Joan



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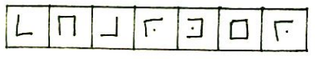
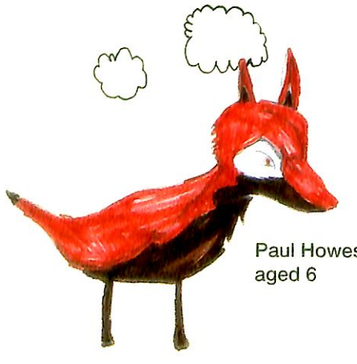
3 

What do you call a midnight feast?

A bad spread!

Michelle Murphy, aged 8



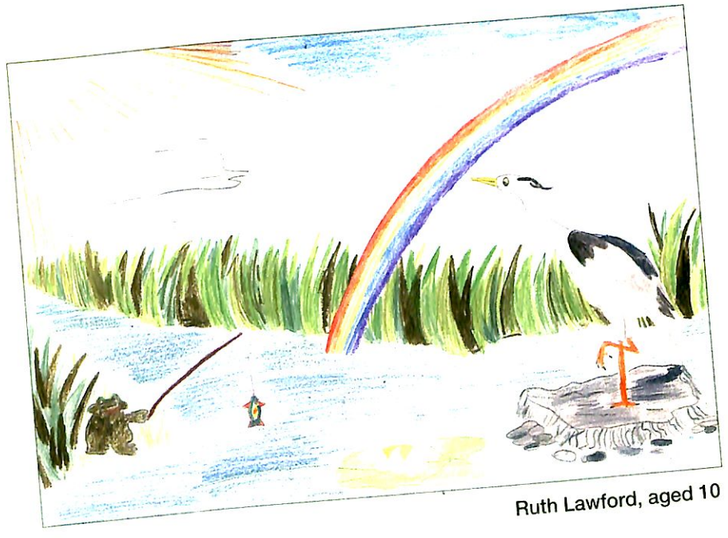
Paul Howes, aged 6

Keeley Keohone, aged 6½

What do you call a baby whale?

A little squirt!

James Mannings, aged 8



Ruth Lawford, aged 10

A pike was swimming down below,
He sees black legs kicking to and fro',
He wonders what,
Then goes to find out,
But just then Toad pulls Moley out!

Simon Lord, aged 9

ANSWERS
PIG PEN CODE 1 Measly 2 Scarface 3 Charmer

I WANT TO BE FREE

I am a whale that once lived free,
But a man came with a huge, big net,
Captured me and took me
to a place called a zoo.

So now I have to fantasize
And look at you with scornful eyes,
I show no emotion,
But you don't care.

Oh how I long to be free in the open sea,
With my family near the waterfall,
Where the sun rises over us all.

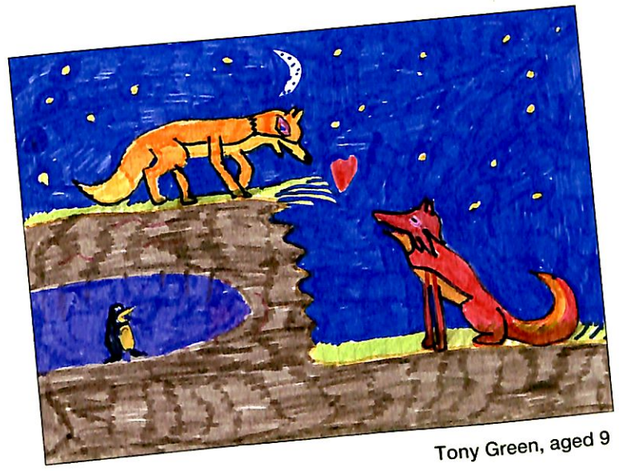
Matthew Errington, aged 10

Claire Connely, aged 7

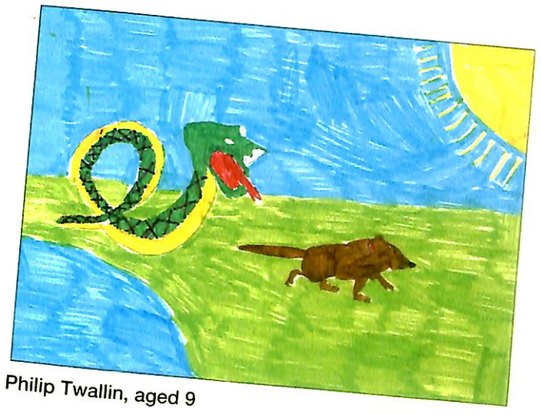
What do you call a bee with a quiet hum?

A mumble bee!

Debbie Donovan, aged 11½



Tony Green, aged 9



Philip Twallin, aged 9

What do you call a cat who has just eaten a duck?

A duck-filled fattypuss!

Douglas Hobson, aged 5

Shelley Cleworth, aged 5

SEARCHING FOR WHITE DEER PARK

Fox and Vixen are Farthing Wood Friends,
Off on a journey that may never end.
Looking for safety at White Deer Park,
Walking by day and sleeping when dark.

Whistler, Adder, Rabbit and Toad,
All follow behind, all on the same road.
Not stopping to argue, not stopping to fight,
Each one treating the other one right.

They will not all get there, they won't all survive,
But Badger and Fox try to keep them alive.
Until the day when the park is in view,
All living together, good friends, always true.

Lucy Gifford, aged 8.

Secret World of..

A LAKE IN SPRING

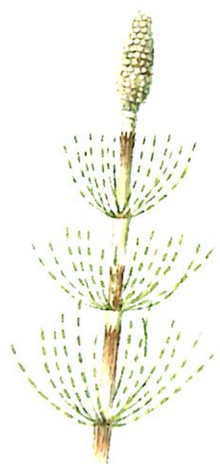
"Hello mateys! It's spring, and I've just finished mating in a nearby pond. Now I'm hungry, and on the look-out for food. This large lake looks a fine sort of place to spend the day dozing under a log. When the sun goes down, I reckon one or two plump worms might wriggle in my direction. The lake is surrounded by grassy banks and dense woodland. Most of the activity is on the water, where birds are feeding, courting and building their nests. There are a few insects buzzing about, too."

Toad's Challenge: ship ahoy, mateys! How many rowing boats can you landlubbers spot on the water?

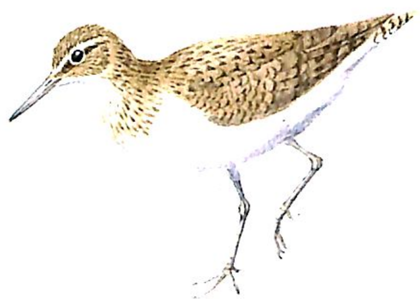
Well, me hearties, there are five rowing boats on the lake – but only two are being rowed.

The Great-crested grebe starts courting in spring. Couples begin head-shaking, paddling high on the water and offering gifts of weed and fish to each other. Eventually a pair gets round to mating, and soon striped chicks are hitching a ride on their parents' backs.

Swamp cypress (the large tree on the left of the main picture) was introduced into Britain from American freshwater swamps. There's not much oxygen in a swamp, so it grows special air roots, which rise out of the water and look like knobbly knees! Its round, green cones, shown here, turn purple in autumn.



Water horsetails often grow in large patches, covering whole areas of a lake or marsh. The tall plant stems, topped off with a cone, look like rather moth-eaten horses' tails.

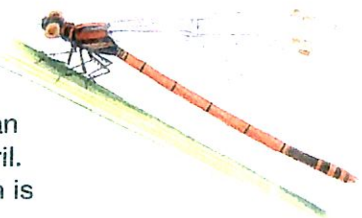


Common sandpipers aren't easy to spot as they probe in the mud on the lake shore. That's because their dull, grey and brown plumage camouflages them against the rocks, pebbles and mud. Common sandpiper chicks start to fly when only two weeks old.

Wigeon enjoy grazing on a grassy bank, like geese, rather than dine on water plants. The drake has a chestnut head and creamy crown. Look for his green wing patches when he's flying.

The Gadwall drake is not especially colourful but he's quite handsomely marked with reddish brown wing patches, and black feathers near the tail. Like other dabbling ducks, the Gadwall up-ends, sticking its tail in the air, while feeding on underwater weeds.

Osier is a shrubby willow often found near water. Its leaves are long and narrow, green on top and silvery underneath. Its bendy stems – called withies – are used to make baskets, chairs and lobster pots.



The Large red damselfly can be seen flying as early as April. The damselfly's red abdomen is marked with black stripes.

WATER BABIES

About half the world's insects live in fresh water. Some stay underwater most of the time, some live in the water when young and come out to live above the water when they are adult. Other insects live in water but need to come up every now and then to take a deep breath. These insects have developed special ways of storing the air so that they can stay under for long stretches.

MAKE A MINIBEAST DIAL

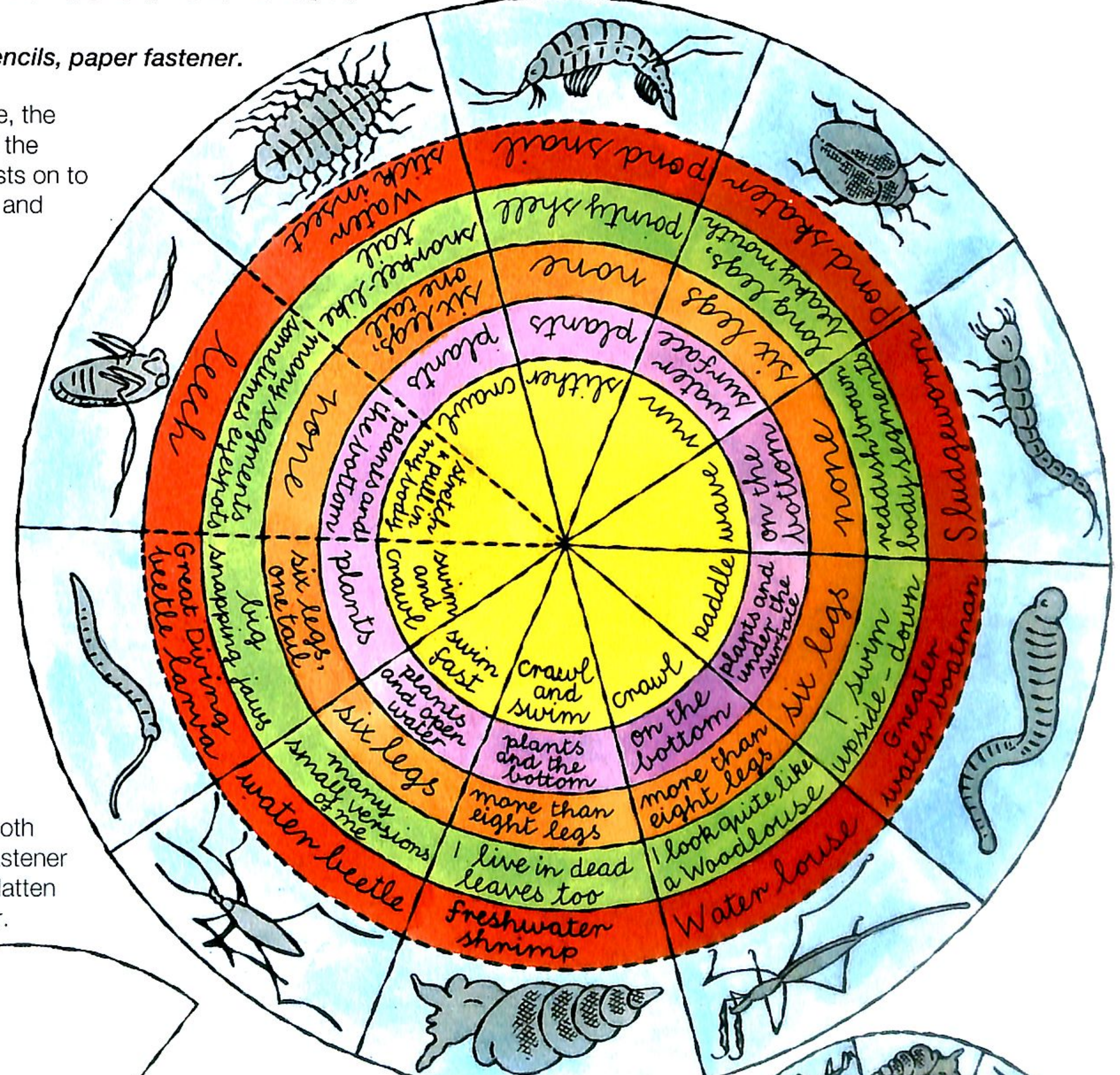
You will need:
thin card, scissors, pencils, paper fastener.

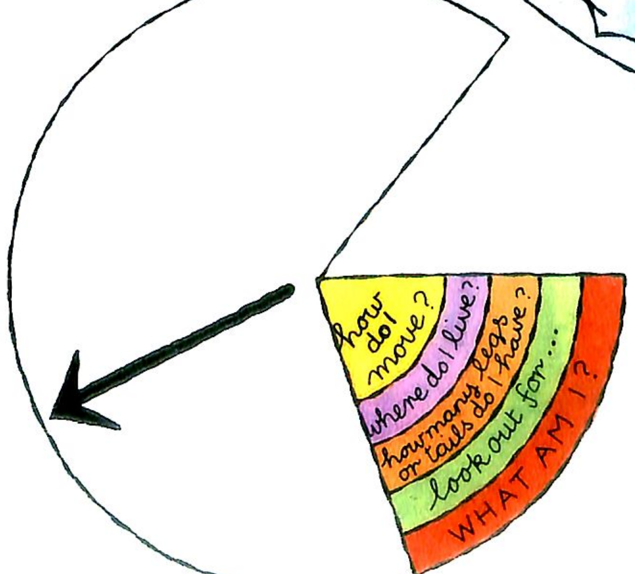
1 Trace the large circle, the black lines inside it and the pictures of the minibeasts on to card. Cut the circle out and colour in the pictures.

2 The smaller dotted circle has a wedge cut out of it. Trace this circle on to card and cut it out.

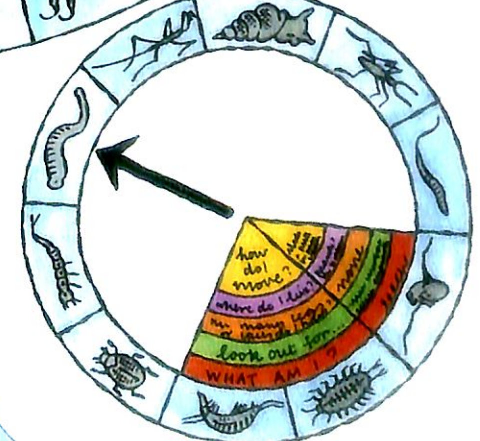
3 Copy the writing on to the big circle. Draw an arrow on the smaller circle and write on the questions (see diagram below).

4 Make a small hole through the middle of both circles. Push a paper fastener through the holes and flatten the ends of the fastener.





5 If you turn the dial so that the arrow points to a minibeast, the writing opposite will tell you all about it.

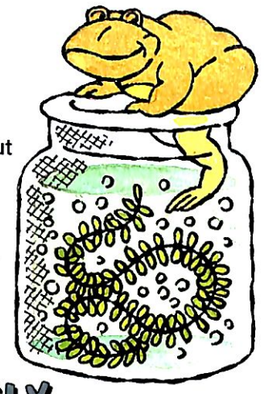


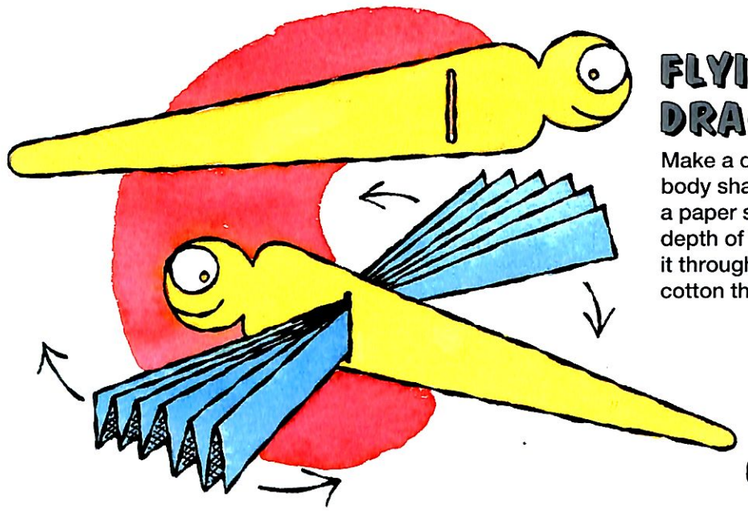
Where can you find giant snails?

At the end of giants' fingers.

BE A NATURE DETECTIVE

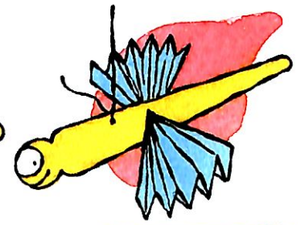
Plants that live in the water use sunlight to make food, and give off oxygen in the process. This is very important for the animals that live under the water, such as Water fleas and pond snails, as without oxygen to breath, they would drown. Buy some pond weed from your local pet shop and put it in a glass jar full of water, with the weed completely covered. If you put the jar in a sunny spot, you'll see bubbles of oxygen rising in the water.





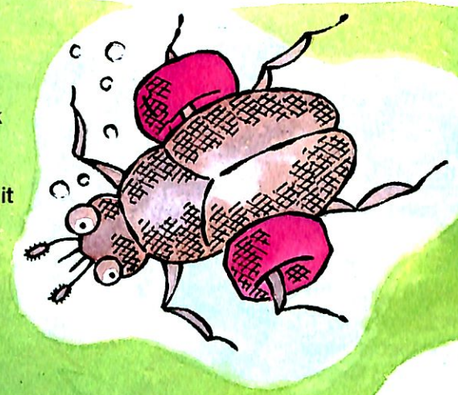
FLYING DRAGONFLY

Make a dragonfly from coloured paper. Cut out a body shape and make a slit near the head end. Cut a paper strip the same length and three times the depth of the body. Fold it like a concertina and push it through the slit. Open the wings. Thread some cotton through the body to make the dragonfly fly.



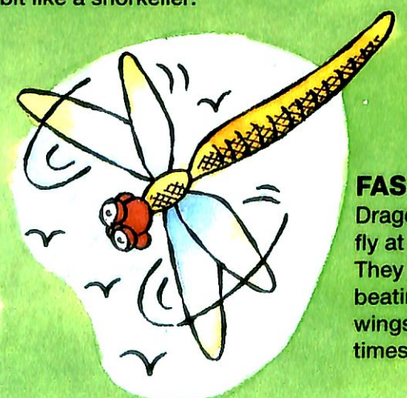
BUOYANT BEETLES

Water beetles are air-breathing insects and have to make regular trips to the surface of the water to pick up supplies. The Silver water beetle traps air on the hairs under its body. It also stores air underneath its wings – clever, but that air makes it a struggle when it tries to dive. Put on some water wings and try it for yourself next time you go to the swimming pool!



BREATHING THROUGH YOUR TAIL!

The Water stick insect breathes through its long tail, by making short visits to the surface. It sticks its tail out of the water and sucks in air, a bit like a snorkeller.



INSECT PATROL

The big Hawker dragonflies patrol their territory regularly, rather like a hawk.

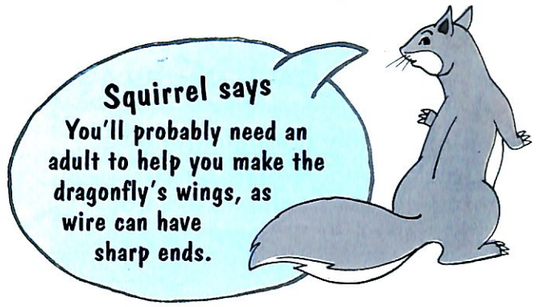
FAST FLYER

Dragonflies can fly at up to 30kph. They do this by beating their wings up to 20 times each second.

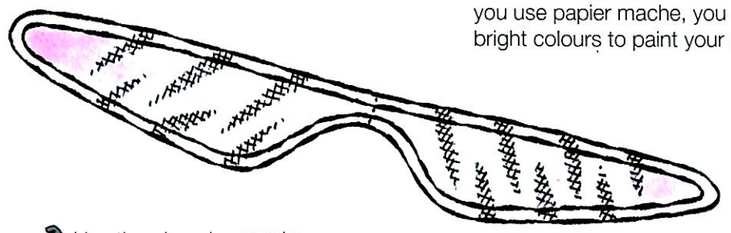
MAKING A DRAGONFLY

You will need:

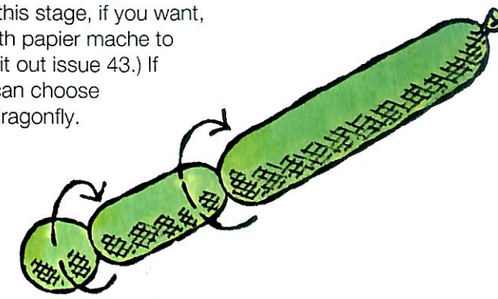
long balloon, soft wire (about three times the length of the blown-up balloon), tracing paper, sticky tape or string, pipe cleaners, glue, garden wire, ping-pong ball.



1 Bend the soft wire into the shape of the wings. Cover them with tracing paper, gluing it in place.



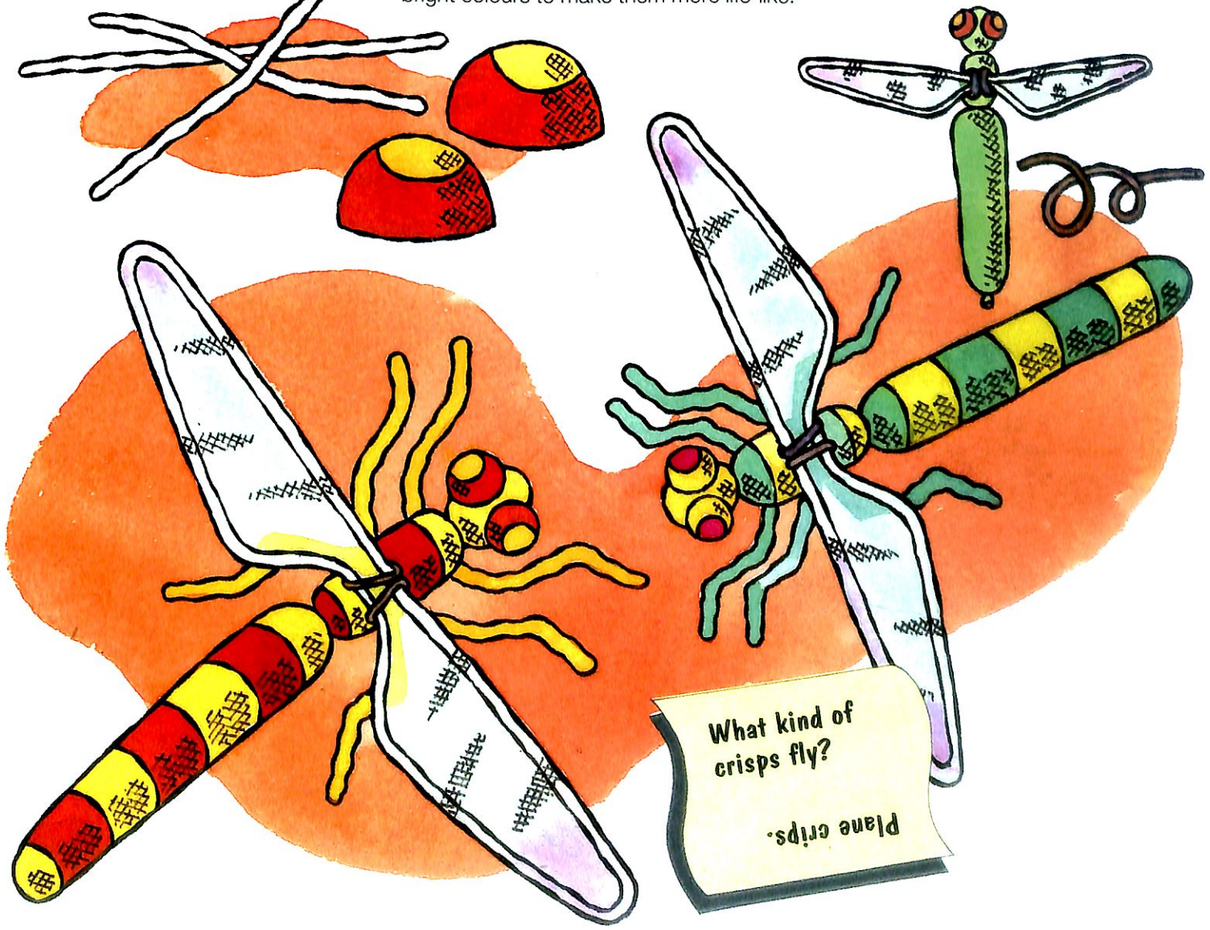
2 To make the body, blow up a long balloon and twist it in three places. Keep the twists in place with sticky tape or string. At this stage, if you want, you can cover the balloon with papier mache to make it stronger (see Puzzle it out issue 43.) If you use papier mache, you can choose bright colours to paint your dragonfly.



3 Use the pipe cleaners to make six legs. Glue the legs to the thorax.

4 Cut a ping-pong ball in half and glue them to the head for eyes. You can paint them in bright colours to make them more life-like.

5 Attach the wings to the thorax by wrapping garden wire round and tying it underneath.



BUBBLES AND BALLOONS

Some animals blow up balloons to amplify (make louder) their calls. But bubble-blowing animals are not just full of hot air. Inflation can also be a colourful form of display. You can't beat a gas bag for attracting a mate or scaring off rivals!

IT'S Amazing!

TAKE THAT!

Male animals often challenge rivals by showing their muscles or brandishing their horns. But a male camel gives a slightly rude and funny display. The small, pink balloon hanging out of his mouth is called a palu.

◀ FAR CRY

Calling from the treetops of a Sumatran forest, a male Siamang makes sure he is heard far and wide. By blowing up his throat pouch as big as a football, his howl becomes much louder.

Why did the robber take a bubble bath?

So he could make a clean getaway.

Q : Which fish turns into a spiky balloon to defend itself?

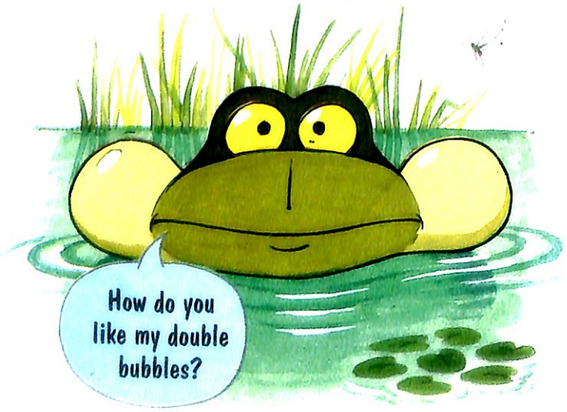
A : The Porcupine fish or Puffer fish.

▼ PUFFED-UP PIRATE

One of the finest balloons of the bird world belongs to the Frigate bird. This rascally pirate often raids other birds to burgle their food. But when it comes to love, its dazzling red display is a real winner.

▼ BUBBLE BATH

When trying to attract a mate with loud croaks, frogs blow up air sacs in their throats. Edible frog has a pair of big bubbles – one on either side of his throat.



◀ UP, UP AND AWAY

Blowing up balloons can be a lot of fun. This boy looks as though he's blown up his balloon as far as it will go. It's no joke when you blow too much and it pops in your face.

▲ BELUGA BULGE

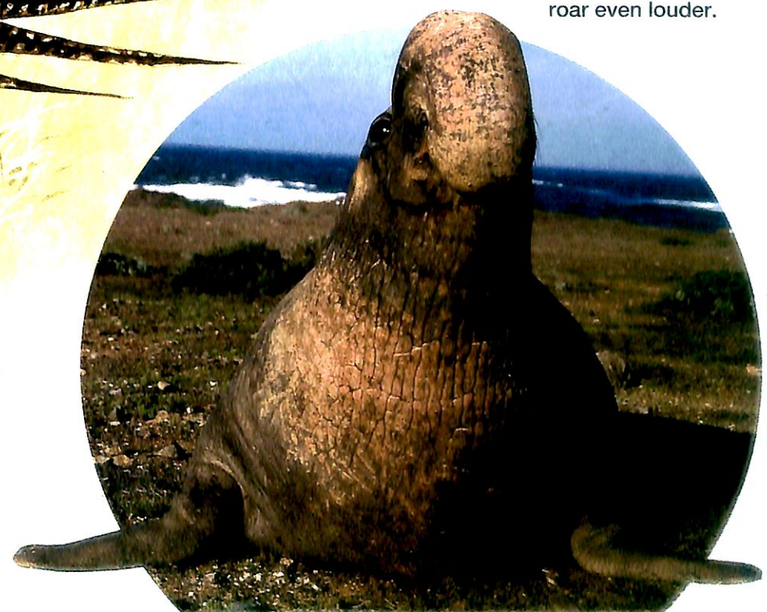
This Beluga, or White, whale doesn't just look brainy – it is! When it wants to communicate underwater, it makes its forehead bigger by using special muscles. This big sound chamber helps it make noises that earn it the nickname of Sea canary.

TRUNK CALL ▼

Elephant seals are the biggest seals of all. They can reach 6m long and weigh up to 3.5 tons. Only males have a short trunk, which usually hangs over its mouth. At mating time, the seal inflates his trunk to make his roar even louder.

▲ DOUBLE-BREASTED BIRD

When a male Sage grouse is intent on impressing a female, he does some serious strutting. His spiky tail display is magnificent, but his crowning glory is a couple of pumped-up air pockets on his chest.



Puzzle it out ???

THE FOX CUB NURSERY

Vixen was at home with her four new fox cubs: Bold, Dreamer, Charmer and Friendly. They were a few weeks old and beginning to learn a few things! Here are some of the games the young cubs played.

SORTING SHAPES
The young foxes are learning to sort out shapes. Can you see which shapes should be posted through which holes?

HERR MAC

1 2 3 4 5 6

A B C D E F

D.LOB

TANGLED WOOL
Vixen was teaching the cubs to pounce on their prey by throwing them balls of wool. But the wool became tangled – can you sort out which thread belongs to which ball of wool?

A B C D E

BAFFLING BOOKS
The titles of the books on the bookshelf are all well known – but the artist has muddled them up. Can you work out what the titles are meant to be?

WATERSHIP THE OTTER

THE JUNGLE BEAUTY

WIND DOWN

BLACK BOOK

TARKA OF THE WILD

CALL IN THE WILLOWS

DEAR REM

CUB NAMES
Unscramble the names of the young fox cubs.

LYN FRIED

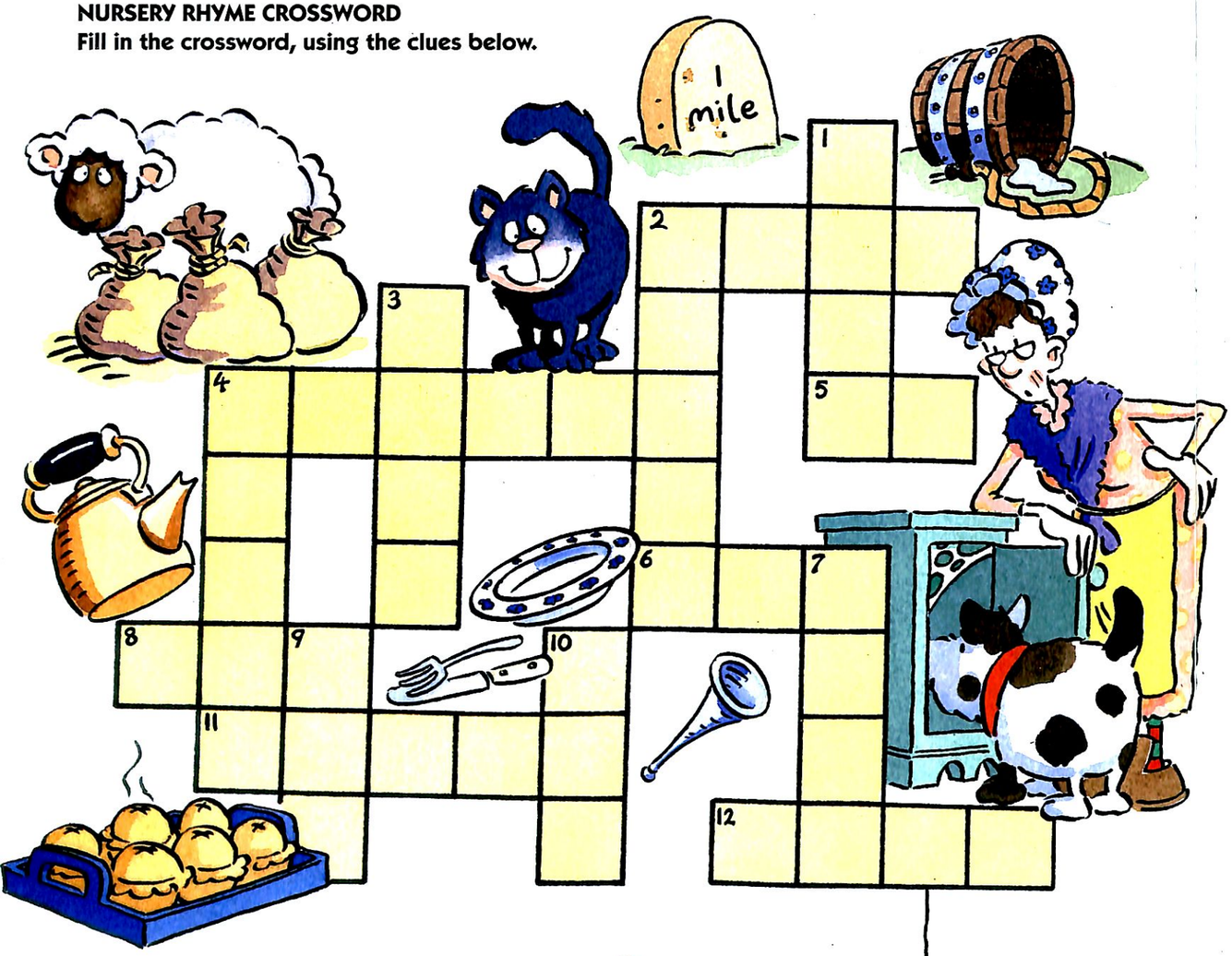
10 7 2 4

BUILDING BLOCKS
Fill in all the numbers starting with the bottom row. Each number in each row is the total sum of the two numbers lying directly beneath it. For example:

	8	
5		3

Puzzle it out

NURSERY RHYME CROSSWORD
Fill in the crossword, using the clues below.

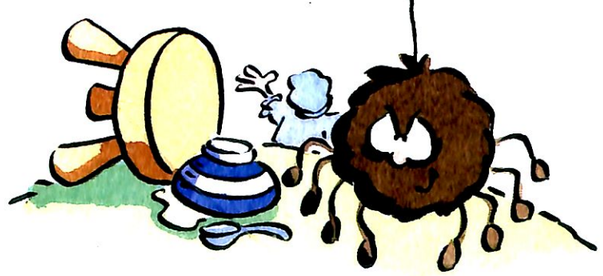


Across

2 Where did the old woman live with all her children?
4 What frightened Little Miss Muffet?
5 Did Simple Simon get his pie?
6 What was the piper's son called?
8 Where should children be when Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town?
11 Who put the kettle on?
12 "Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you ——?"

Down

1 What instrument does Little Boy Blue blow?
2 "Jack —— could eat no fat."
3 Who went up the hill with Jack?
4 "Baa, baa, black ——."
7 How far did the crooked man walk?
9 What animal lived with Old Mother Hubbard?
10 "Sing a song of sixpence, a pocketful of ——."



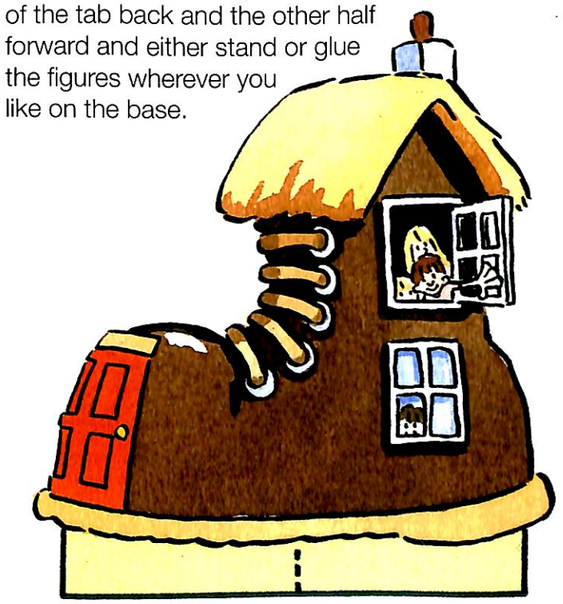
ANSWERS
SORTING SHAPES 1B, 2F, 3E, 4A, 5C, 6D.
TANGLED WOOL Red E, Purple D, Yellow C, Green A, Blue B.
BAFFLING BOOKS The Jungle Book, Watership Down, Wind in the Willows, Black Beauty, Call of the Wild, Tarka the Otter.
BUILDING BLOCKS row 1: 8, 2, 3, 4 row 2: 10, 5, 7 row 3: 15, 12 row 4: 27.
NURSERY RHYME CROSSWORD Across: 2 Shoe 4 Spider 5 No 6 Tom 8 Bed 11 Polly 12 Been. Down: 1 Horn 2 Sprat 3 Jill 4 Sheep 7 Mile 9 Dog 10 Rye.

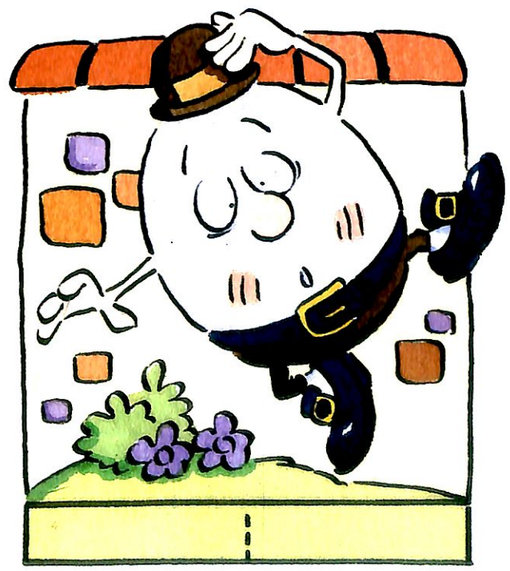
NURSERY RHYME CUT-OUTS

You will need stiff paper or thin card, tracing paper, pencil, glue, felt tips, scissors.

Base
Cut out a piece of thin card about the same size as this magazine when it is closed. Draw and colour in some grass and flowers.

Nursery rhyme people
Trace the nursery rhyme characters from this page on to card or paper – or draw your own. Colour them in and cut them out. Cut the tab at the bottom of each figure in half. Bend one half of the tab back and the other half forward and either stand or glue the figures wherever you like on the base.



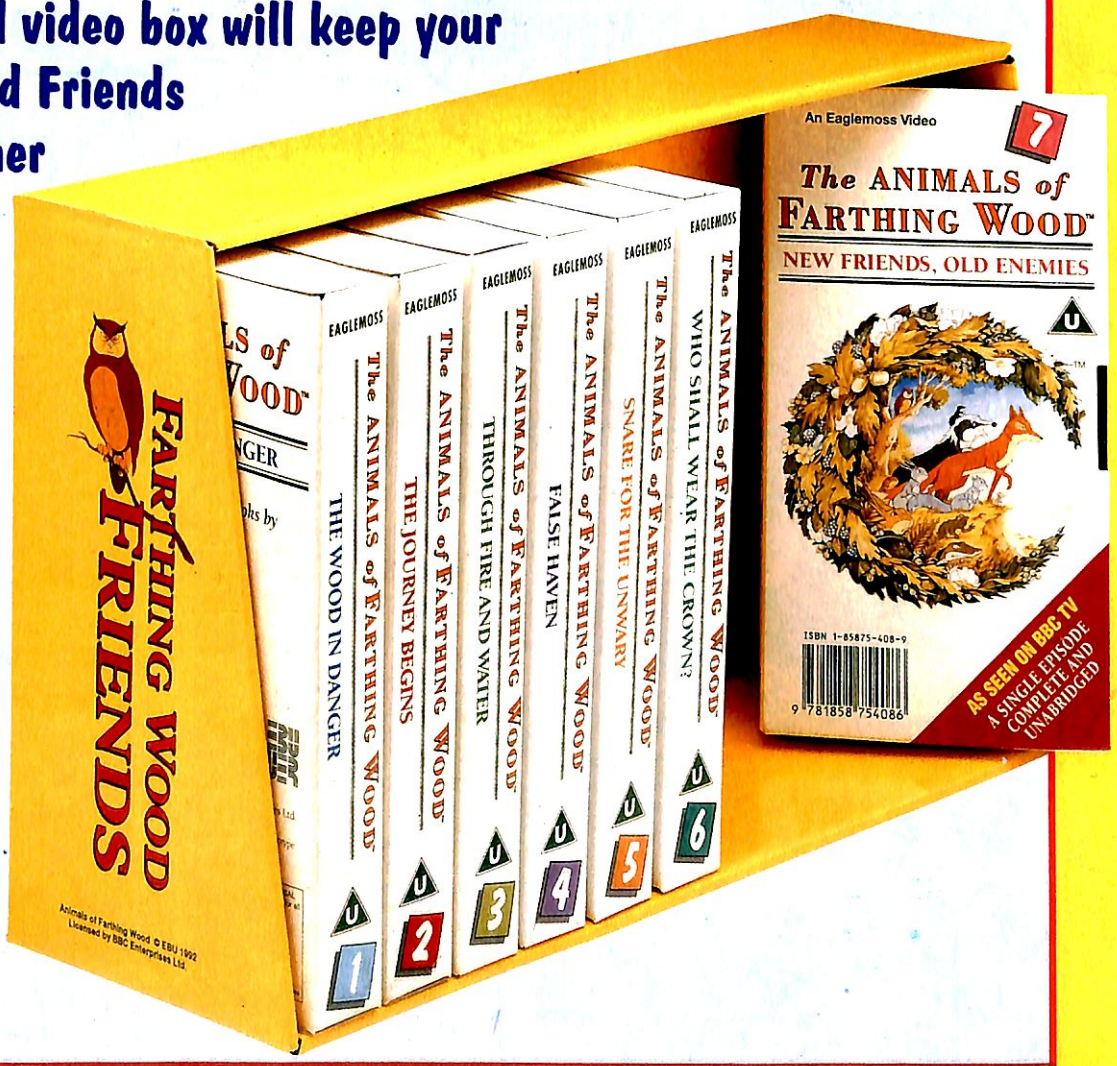


Cut down the middle, push one half forward and the other half back, then glue to the base.

FARTHING WOOD FRIENDS VIDEO BOX

Farthing Wood Friends can be Forever!—with these smart video boxes

This colourful video box will keep your Farthing Wood Friends collection together and means you will always be able to find your favourite episode. Each box holds 13 videos and features the distinctive Farthing Wood logo, so it will look great on your shelves.



SEE THE SPECIAL OFFER AVAILABLE WITH THIS ISSUE OF FARTHING WOOD FRIENDS!